

Remarks/Arguments:

Introduction

Claims 1-9, 11-14, 19, 21, 36, 39 and 41-56 are pending.

Claim 1 has been amended to further describe the graft as comprising, *inter alia*, an inflatable porous cuff is disposed in an axisymmetric cylindrical manner around the proximal or distal end of the graft body section. Support for this amendment may be found in the specification at paragraph [0039].

Claim 21 has been amended to further describe the graft as comprising, *inter alia*, a stent comprising a multi-crown configuration. Support for this amendment may be found in the specification at paragraph [0043].

Claim 39 has been amended to further describe the graft as comprising, *inter alia*, at least one inflatable porous cuff is disposed in an axisymmetric cylindrical manner around the proximal end of the graft body section; a connector member affixed to the proximal or distal end of the graft body section, the connector member comprising one or more connector elements; a stent comprising one or more proximal stent connector elements coupled to the one or more connector member connector elements wherein the stent comprises a multi-crown configuration. Support for this amendment may be found in the specification at paragraphs [0039] and [0043].

Claims 41-56 have been added. Support for newly added claims 41 and 49 may be found in the Specification at paragraph [0039]. Support for newly added claims 42-47 and 50-55 may be found in the Specification at paragraph [0043]. Support for newly added claims 48 and 56 may be found in originally filed claim 9.

No new matter is introduced with these amendments. Entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

Section 103 Rejections

Claims 1-9, 12-14, 18, 19, 21, 36 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0103527 to Kocur et al. (hereinafter "Kocur") in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0091440 to Calcote (hereinafter "Calcote") and U.S. Patent No. 6,051,648 to Rhee et al. (hereinafter "Rhee"). Claims 1-9, 11, 13-14, 18, 19, 36 and 39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kocur in view of Calcote and U.S. Patent No. 6,663,662 to Pacetti et al. (hereinafter "Pacetti"). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Kocur, Calcote, Rhee and Pacetti, individually or in combination, fail to teach or suggest, *inter alia*,

(i) a graft comprising, *inter alia*, an inflatable porous cuff is disposed in an axisymmetric cylindrical manner around the proximal or distal end of the graft body section, as set forth in claim 1 (emphasis added);

(ii) a graft comprising, *inter alia*, a connector member affixed to the proximal or distal end of the graft body section, the connector member comprising one or more connector elements, and a stent comprising one or more proximal stent connector elements coupled to the one or more connector member connector elements wherein the stent comprises a multi-crown configuration, as set forth in claim 21 (emphasis added); and

(iii) a graft comprising, *inter alia*, at least one inflatable porous cuff disposed at the proximal or distal end of the graft body section and in fluid communication with the at least one channel, wherein the at least one inflatable porous cuff is disposed in an axisymmetric cylindrical manner around the proximal end of the graft body section; a connector member affixed to the proximal or distal end of the graft body section, the connector member comprising one or more connector elements; and a stent comprising one or more proximal stent connector elements coupled to the one or more connector member

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connector elements wherein the stent comprises a multi-crown configuration, as set forth in claim 39 (emphasis added).

Thus, independent claims 1, 21 and 39 are patentably distinct over Kocur, Calcote, Rhee and Pacetti, individually or in combination. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of independent claims 1, 21 and 39 are respectfully requested.

Summary

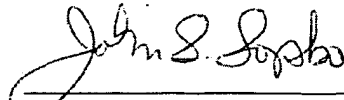
Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 21 and 39, and all claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct. This application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is therefore respectfully solicited.

The present application as amended contains 34 total claims and 3 independent claims. Upon filing an excess claim fee of 27 claims (or for a total of 47 claims) was paid. Thus, no claim fee is believed to be due with the present amendments. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees associated with this communication, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-2461. Such authorization includes authorization to charge fees for extensions of time, if any, under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 and also should be treated as a constructive petition for an extension of time in this reply or any future reply pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136.

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Should the Examiner have any questions or comments concerning the above, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John S. Sopko", written in black ink.

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